

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7722

S E C R E T ROME 14871

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: SECSTATE VISIT TO ROME--REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT

TO THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR VOLPE

1. I HAVE RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM GIANNI AGNELLI FOR AN APPOINTMENT WHILE YOU ARE IN ROME NOV. 4-5. THIS REQUEST WAS DELIVERED THROUGH DR. VITTORINO CHIUSANO, AGNELLI'S CLOSEST AND MOST TRUSTED BUSINESS AND POLITICAL ADVISOR. ALTHOUGH I WAS UNABLE TO MEET PERSONALLY WITH CHIUSANO DUE TO A CURRENT ILLNESS, I HAD MY SPECIAL ASSISTANT SEE HIM.

2. CHIUSANO REPORTED THAT AGNELLI IS EXTREMELY DESIROUS OF THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE MEETING WITH YOU. AS YOU RECALL, AGNELLI WAS TRYING TO ADJUST HIS U.S. TRIP TO MEET YUOR WASHINGTON SCHEDULE IN OCTOBER BUT

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CURRENT GOVERNMENT SITUATION AND FIAT LABOR PROBLEMS

PRECULDE HIS LEAVING ITALY. HE HOPED THAT AN INITIAL AND BRIEF MEETING COULD BE ARRANGED WHILE YOU ARE IN ROME, PREFERABLY AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 5.

3. PRINCIPALLY, AGNELLI WANTS TO RECEIVE FROM YOU A RECONFIRMATION OF THE U.S. POSITION REGARDING ITALY. AT A SECOND MEETING WHICH COULD TAKE PLACE LATER IN THE MONTH TO WHICH AGNELLI WOULD AGREE TO TRAVEL (U.S. OR ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE), HE WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS IN MORE DETAIL MEASURES WHICH ITALY, WITH POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE FROM U.S., COULD TAKE IN ORDER TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT HERE.

4. CHIUSANO SPEAKING PERSONALLY (BUT UNDOUBTEDLY SHARING AGNELLI'S VIEW) ABOUT CURRENT CRISIS EXPRESSED OPINION THAT IT WAS EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL THAT FANFANI COULD SUCCESSFULLY RECONSTITUTE CENTER-LEFT. FURTHERMORE, EVEN IF HE WAS SUCCESSFUL IT WOULD BE A GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD DIE AS SOON AS IT WAS BORN. HE WAS EMPHATIC, HOWEVER, IN STATING THAT THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN ITALY COULD PUT TOGETHER AN EFFECTIVE COALITION TO EXCLUDE THE PCI FROM GOVERNMENT. THE MAJOR PROBLEM IS HOW TO INDUCE ITALY'S DISPARATE POLITICAL ELEMENTS TO UNITE.

5. COMMENT: I RECOGNIZE THAT YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THIS VISIT IS EXTREMELY TIGHT. HOWEVER, I THINK IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT YOU MEET WITH AGNELLI DURING THIS TRIP. CRITICAL TIME HERE AND THIS IS HIS SECOND ATTEMPT TO GET TOGETHER WITH YOU. AS I WROTE HAL SONNENFELDT FOR YOUR INFORMATION SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, AGNELLI, AFTER SEVERAL PRIVATE MEETINGS WHERE HE EXPRESSED ONLY VAGUE GENERALITIES ON THE QUESTION OF PCI ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT, FINALLY EXPRESSED TO ME HIS CLEAR OPPOSITION TO THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE. SUBSEQUENT TO THAT, IN HIS
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CAPACITY AS HEAD OF CONFINDUSTRIA HE ISSUED PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT. AT THE SAME TIME AGNELLI KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL THE POLITICAL POWER WIELDED IN THIS COUNTRY BY THE LEFT GENERALLY AND THE PCI PARTICULARLY. DUE TO LEFT'S CONTROL OF LABOR, HE MUST BE VERY PRAGMATIC IN HIS POSITIONS TO PROTECT HIS BUSINESS INTERESTS. HE IS ALL TOO WELL AWARE THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE ANTI-COMMUNIST. AN EFFECTIVE POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE MUST BE FORMED. ALTHOUGH

I AM UNCLEAR ON HIS MOTIVES (PATRIOTIC, PRAGMATIC OR PERSONAL
PWER), I AM CONVINCED HS IS DETERMINED TO SEE ITALY OUT OF
BLIND ALLEY IT APPEARS HEADED. IN MY VIEW, HE HAS THE POT-
ENTIAL FOR PLAYING EFFECTIVE ROLE IN ITALY'S CURRENT ECONOMIC
POLITICAL CRISIS AND WE SHOULD LISTEN TO WHAT HE HAS TO SAY.
VOLPE

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